

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi*
 [825] travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits
 as its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local
 spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves
 over the head and shoulders⁴¹ with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure.
 At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed
 into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the
 land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each
 other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilanis* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanis*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

[781] Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too
 [789] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself, the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

● [576] ⁴¹ This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

evening to kill geese. When they returned with only three geese, a long conference was held. I offered all the food I could spare and it was decided that, in return for a few yams and some of the goose, I should make dampers and put jam on them for the children, all of whom were under five and very hungry, and give small pieces of tobacco to the men and women. This was Albert's, Agnes's, and Big Jack's tobacco, and so everyone traded something and all pronounced it a fair deal. I cooked the damper, smothered it with jam and, with Agnes prompting, called; "Kakritjui Kali." "Little ones, come." The five who could walk, ran, then stood shyly by while I handed each a piece; then they ran back to their mothers. Soon they were back and, nudged by their mothers, all murmured "Thank you very much." This was a phrase I never heard, either in the native language or in English, when they were receiving from another native. Giving and receiving were so much a part of their life that among themselves "thank you's" seemed unnecessary.

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Fig. 16. Agnes, Filley, and Crissy-boy cooling off in the river